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## Affix-grammatika. Een onderzoek naar woordvorming in het Nederlands

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## SUMMARY

This study on affix-grammar deals with several issues that are in the focus of recent Dutch (and partly, English) morphological research. The topics discussed are native against non-native morpho(nology) and dynamic against static descriptions (chapter 2); word stress and word rhythm in linear and non-linear phonology (chapter 3); borderlines between syntax and morphology, concentrating on phrasal derivations and synthetic compounds on the one hand and on the grammar of the diminutive on the other (chapter 4).

Disparate as they may seem at first sight, these issues are claimed to be closely interconnected. Consequently, an affix-grammar is conceived as a very complex morphological function. A sample is the diminutive function, the only one in this study that is worked out in detail: **man + etje = mannetje** ('little man', approximately) exemplifies the word-level effects of this function.

$F_{(dim)} N_i \backslash N_i$  ( $N_i$  = count noun, individual-denoting noun)

Internal syntax: Argument  $N_i$  + Functor  $N_i \backslash N_i$  = Value  $N_i$

Morphonoly : Functor is **etje**, **tje**, **pje** or **je**, depending on certain phonological or morphonological properties of the Argument.

Stress :  $F_{(dim)}$  is stress-neutral.

External syntax: Valence of Value  $\neq$  Valence of Argument:  
 $F_{(dim)}$  is restricted to  $N_i \subset CNP_i \subset Term$ .

Semantics : Denotation of Value  $\subseteq$  Denotation of Argument, respecting the Extension-restriction.

Pragmatics : Connotation of Value  $\neq$  Connotation of Argument.

This diminutive grammar explicitly specifies all the implicit knowledge a speaker of Dutch is supposed to have available in order to successfully use diminutives based on count nouns.

Since not all diminutives are formed according to the above function, a supplementary function is introduced providing for diminutives that are derived from mass nouns, including abstract proper names. An example of this function is **houtje** ('bit of wood').

The internal syntax of native Dutch derivations is not very controversial, but some morphonological aspects are. The alternating forms of the diminutive suffix, as well as other suffixes such as **(e)loos**, **(e)lijk**, **(e)ling** and **(e)nis** give rise to the theoretical question whether morphonological rules are best described 'dynamically' or 'statically'.

A dynamic description, in the tradition of generative grammar, allows for deletion, insertion and change of segments, whereas a static description, not rejecting phonotactically conditioned deletion, need only refer to complementary distribution rather than insertion and change. In the native Dutch lexicon, as opposed to the imported vocabulary (for the most part adapted borrowings of Romance origin), the morphonological generalizations are expressed in static terms, for reasons of simplicity, which is to say that there is no justification

for abstract underlying forms subject to certain manipulations resulting in the required surface forms. Operations of that type may have some attraction for the linguist faced with imported Dutch derivations, but the conclusion of chapter 2 is that in that area of research chaos reigns. In other words, the morpho(n)ology of imported derivations can not be expressed by morphological functions that are part of the grammar of Dutch.

Chapter 3 is an exercise in word stress and rhythm. Diminutives are not very interesting in this respect, since the diminutive suffix itself is stress-neutral and hence qualified as a 'stripper': an element that has to be stripped out of the context of the Main Stress Rule for Dutch. The theoretical issue in this chapter, as in the preceding one, is the question whether stress assignment rules are dynamic or static objects. Here the controversy is translated in terms of non-linear against linear phonology. The polemical discussion, however, is not so much directed against non-linear phonology, but rather the non-abstract descriptive power of linear stress and rhythm rules is emphasized. Concrete 'surfacy' rules as the 'Rhythmic Hammock', locating stressed syllables at a maximal distance, and the 'Trochee Principle', accounting for strong/weak alternations, are not in need of cyclic rule application or rhythmic adjustments, given an appropriate Main Stress Rule. A new concept is the Janus-syllable: taking the location of main stress for granted, Janus shows up when the Trochee Principle meets a stressed syllable, resulting in a stress clash. The 'Alternation Condition', blocking two adjacent stressed syllables (\*s s | s s → w s), identifies Janus as a forced metrically weak syllable as: the first in **portrèt** ('portrait') and the third in **fonologìe** ('phonology'). The Janus-syllable shows its strong face as a conditioning factor for vowel reduction: **fonelogie** and **fonelegie** are possible pronunciations, **fonolegie** is not. In conclusion the force of the Alternation Condition is tested against rhythmic patterns of Dutch compounds.

Chapter 4 discusses the syntax, semantics and - in a short final paragraph - pragmatics of an affix-grammar, with special reference to the diminutive. With the proper analysis of complex and synthetic compounds it is possible to review some borderline battles between morphology and syntax: the principle of compositionality is placed in position, forcing a limited access to the domain of syntax to morphological functions. Thus, derivations as **breedgeschouderd** ('broad-shouldered') and **driewieler** ('tricycle') are syntactically analyzed as noun phrase - affix compositions. Branching conditions on phrases limit the set of possible phrasal arguments, accordingly excluding non-words as **bredergeschouderd** and **de-driewieler** ('broader-shouldered', 'the-tricycle'). The grammar of the diminutive, however, does not include 'phrasy' arguments, disregarding exceptional cases. So the external syntactic aspects of the diminutive function are of a different nature: the valence of the value does not equal the valence of the argument. The so-called Term-Restriction excludes the diminutive function from common noun phrases that are not syntactic terms. The distinction between common noun phrases that are terms and common noun phrases that are not is rooted in the semantics: syntactic terms may have set-denotations, whereas 'non-terms' are of a higher order type. F<sup>(dim)</sup> can apply in, for example, 'Mijn dokter (doktertje) is aardig' ('My<sup>(dim)</sup> doctor is nice'), but not in 'Mijn broer is dokter (\*doktertje)' ('My brother is doctor'), since

'Mijn dokter' is a term and 'dokter' is not. Being an element of a term is not a sufficient condition for the application of the diminutive function, as there are intensional definite descriptions (that are to be qualified as terms) where diminutives are odd. For that reason the Extension-restriction is incorporated in the grammar of the diminutive. Here some model-theoretic literature on generic reference is discussed, resulting in the conclusion that 'bare plural' and generic singular phrases, in contrast with intensional definite descriptions, do not resist the diminutive function.

The fact that the diminutive suffix is always an external or peripheral derivational suffix is also explained by reference to the syntactic Term-restriction: **vaderschap** ('fatherhood') is wellformed, but **vadertjeschap** is not, since the word-internal expression **vader** is not a term.

The final paragraph on the pragmatics of the diminutive grammar, where a correlation is stipulated between abuse of  $F_{(dim)}$  and a 'softy' personality, can be read for fun, and therefore be skipped by the serious linguist.